

Remarks

The examiner's reconsideration of the application is requested in view of the further amendments above and comments which follow.

The undersigned telephoned examiner Fayyaz in early March and pointed out to the examiner that in the amendment accompanying application, multiple dependency was deleted from the application. Examiner Fayyaz indicated that a replacement would be issued for the February 25, 2003 office action. However, no replacement was ever received, and therefore this office action is being filed in response to the examiner's February 25, 2003 office action, but also referencing and including the previous amendment filed at the time of nationalization of this application in the United States.

Taking the matters raised by the examiner in turn, in numbered section 1 on page 2 of the office action, Claims 21 and 22 were withdrawn from further consideration. Reconsideration is requested in view of the fact that Claim 21 has now been amended above to be dependent upon Claim 13. It is therefore submitted that Claim 21, and Claim 22 which is dependent upon Claim 21, should remain in the present application for consideration.

In numbered paragraph 2 on page 2 of the office action, Claims 25 and 26 were rejected as being indefinite. However, those claims were cancelled with the national filing of the present application, and should therefore not have been considered.

In numbered paragraph 4 on page 2 of the office action, Claims 4 – 12 and 19 – 20 were objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c) of being of improper form because of multiple dependencies. However, multiple dependency was cancelled when the present application was filed, and therefore those claims should have been, and should be, properly considered.

In numbered paragraph 5 commencing on page 2 of the office action, the examiner has

rejected Claims 1 – 3, 13 – 18 and 23 – 24 under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite. Each of the matters raised by the examiner has been considered when amending the claims, and it is believed that each of the claims is now appropriate and definite. Further amendments have been made to the claims when reviewing them, as will be seen above.

In numbered paragraph 7 beginning on page 3 of the office action, the examiner has rejected Claims 1 – 3, 13 – 18 and 23 – 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious over Solberg U.S. Patent Number 5,900,590. Reconsideration is requested.

Solberg discloses a device for measuring mass (in particular in extra-terrestrial environments) incorporating a controller 16 which may include a memory and a programmable processor. However, Solberg does not disclose or suggest the feature now present in Claim 1, in which the computing means includes a microprocessor (for receiving force signals from a transducer or load cell) that is rotatable with the rotor upon which the liquid sample holder is mounted.

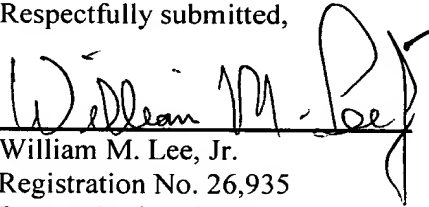
The main amendment to Claim 1 et al., is based on cancelled Claim 3, and on Figure 3 and the relevant description of the microprocessor 54 on page 10 in the last paragraph and in the paragraph bridging pages 10 and 11. Please note that this microprocessor 54 is not to be confused with the second microprocessor 66 which is located outside the chamber 14 (see page 11, first two paragraphs). Independent Claims 13 and 23 have been amended likewise by introducing the on board microprocessor feature from Claim 3.

It is submitted that a person skilled in the art of centrifugal evaporators, who was faced with the problem of trying to obtain a continuous read-out of the weight of the sample in the holders (see page 1, last paragraph of the present Specification) and knowing of the teaching in Solberg, would not consider it to be obvious or as a matter of course to modify such an evaporator by arranging for a microprocessor to be rotatable with the rotor in the evaporation chamber.

Given the above, it is submitted that the application, as amended, distinguishes from the prior art and is allowable thereover. The examiner's further and favorable reconsideration is therefore urged.

May 23, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William M. Lee, Jr.", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large, looped "L" and a prominent "Jr." at the end.

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